THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) A few theft cases of antiquities have been reported from the protected monuments of the Archaeological Survey of India. A list of such objects, as per available information, is given in the Annexure *(see* Appendix 185 Annexure No. 17)

(b) Measures have been taken to check the theft of antiquities from the protected monuments/sites by careful vigilance at the monuments as well as strict enforcement of the Antiquities and the monuments as well as strict enforcement of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. Armed Guards have been deployed at selected monuments and museums under the Archaeological Survey of India. Steps have also been indentified in concert with the enforcing agencies like the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Customs authorities and the State Governments concerned to check the thefts of antiquities and their smuggling by intensifying vigilance and checks at Customs exit points.

Reforms in the Higher Education System

706.DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether higher education in the country is cheaper than the primary education in Private Schools; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to introduce reforms in the higher education system as demanded by the University teachers?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Fee charged for primary classes by some Private Schools is generally higher than that in Governemnt/ Government aided colleges.

(b) The Government and UGC have taken several measures to introduce reforms in higher education. Some of the major steps taken in this direction are as follows:—

- Revision of pay scales of colleges and university teachers w.e.f. 1.1.1996. Opportunities provided for training and career advancement for teachers. All-India Eligibility Test Introduced to attract best talent to the teaching profession.
- Academic staff colleges established for re-orientation of newly appointed university and college teachers.
- 27 Curriculum Development Centres in Sciences and Humanities established to modernise curricula. Model curricula has been prepared for 27 Disciplines in under-graduate and post-graduate courses.
- Financial assistance provided by UGC for improvement of teaching and research under Special Assistance Programme.
- Inter-University Centres established by UGC to provide front-line facilities and services for advancement of research in the University system.
- Higher priority given to grant of autonomy to selected colleges.
- Guidelines for implementation of an Academic Calendar circulated. These guidelines emphasize observances of at least 18 teaching days by universities/ colleges.
- Regulations for minimum standards for the award of first degree, minimum working days etc. notified, by UGC.

Central University Status to Allahabad University

707.SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESORUCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2702, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th July, 1998 and state:

(a) the reasons for the delay in declaring Allahabad University as a Central University; and

(b) the steps taken so far in this regard by the Central Governemnt?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) The issue of conversion of Allahabad University was under consideration of Government. While taking up this issue, the Govt, had to consider similar demands of other Universities. A decision was